

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for identifying and retrieving information about individuals located within a geographic area, the system comprising:

a plurality of broadcasting devices, each broadcasting device being associated with a selected user;

a listening device associated with a requesting user; and

a server including a database;

wherein each broadcasting device emits a wireless data packet containing a unique identification entity (UIE);

wherein the listening device captures the wireless data packets, extracts the UIEs from the packets and sends the UIEs to the database.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the database sends a profile of the selected users to the listening device in response to receiving the UIEs.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the database sends a photograph of the selected users to the listening device in response to receiving the UIEs.

4. The system of claim 2, wherein the requesting user sends a request for an additional form of contact with one or more of the selected users to the database after reviewing the user profiles.

5. The system according to claim 4, wherein the additional form of contact is a phone call, wherein the phone numbers can be masked for privacy.

6. The system of claim 4, wherein the additional form of contact is a text message.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein:

the requesting user sends a request to contact one or more of the selected users to the database; and

the database acts as a middle man to transmit information between the listening device and the broadcasting device.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein the listening device and the broadcasting device are wireless devices capable of bi-directional communication with each other and with the database.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the listening device and the broadcasting device are cellular phones capable of bi-directional communication with each other and with the database.

10. The system of claim 1, wherein the listening device and the broadcasting device are computers capable of bi-directional communication with each other and with the database.

11. The system of claim 1, wherein the listening device and the broadcasting device are PDAs capable of bi-directional communication with each other and with the database.

12. The system of claim 1, wherein the wireless data packets have a predefined number of bits reserved for filtering purposes.

13. The system of claim 1, further comprising a software program residing on the database and on each wireless device, the software program enabling communication among the database and the wireless devices.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein the software program is adapted to filter incoming wireless transmissions.

15. The system of claim 13, wherein the software program is capable of more than one wireless protocol.

16. The system of claim 1, wherein each wireless device is adapted to transmit and receive signals wirelessly.

17. The system of claim 1, further comprising a range extender for extending the effective transmission range of the wireless device.

18. The system of claim 17, wherein the range extender comprises one or more routers and hubs.

19. The system of claim 1, wherein the users may elect to receive targeted advertising on their respective devices.

20. The system of claim 1, wherein the wireless devices are adapted to retransmit wireless data packets once they are received, thereby extending the effective range of the devices.

21. The system of claim 20, wherein each retransmission decrements a time-to-live value, thereby providing a controlled range of transmission.

22. The system of claim 20, wherein the devices are capable of more than one wireless protocol such that a device may receive a wireless data packet under a first protocol and retransmit the wireless data packet under a second protocol.

23. A method of identifying and retrieving information about individuals located within a geographic area, comprising the steps of:

providing a listening device associated with a requesting user and a plurality of broadcasting devices, wherein each broadcasting device is associated with a selected user, wherein each broadcasting device emits a wireless data packet containing a UIE;

providing a server for the network of devices, the server including a database;

capturing the wireless data packets using the listening device;
extracting the UIEs from the data packets using the listening device; and
sending the UIEs to the database using the listening device.

24. The method of claim 23, further comprising the step of sending a profile of each selected user to the listening device using the server.

25. The method of claim 23, further comprising the step of sending a photograph of each selected user to the listening device using the server.

26. The method of claim 24, further comprising the step sending a request for an additional form of contact with one or more of the selected users to the database using the listening device.

27. The method according to claim 26, wherein the additional form of contact is a phone call, wherein the phone numbers can be masked for privacy.

28. The method of claim 26, wherein the additional form of contact is a text message.

29. The method of claim 23, wherein the listening device and the broadcasting device are wireless devices capable of bi-directional communication with each other and with the database.

30. The method of claim 23, wherein the listening device and the broadcasting device are cellular phones capable of bi-directional communication with each other and with the database.

31. The method of claim 23, wherein the listening device and the broadcasting device are computers capable of bi-directional communication with each other and with the database.

32. The method of claim 23, wherein the listening device and the broadcasting device are PDAs capable of bi-directional communication with each other and with the database.

33. The method of claim 23, wherein the wireless data packets have a predefined number of bits reserved for filtering purposes.

34. The method of claim 23, wherein a software program resides on the server and on each wireless device, the software program enabling communication among the database and the wireless devices.

35. The method of claim 34, wherein the software program is adapted to filter incoming wireless transmissions.

36. The method of claim 34, wherein the software program is capable of more than one wireless protocol.

37. The method of claim 23, further comprising the step of providing a range extender for extending the effective transmission range of the wireless device.

38. The method of claim 37, wherein the range extender comprises one or more routers and hubs.

39. The method of claim 23, further comprising the step of retransmitting wireless data packets once they are received using the broadcasting devices, thereby extending the effective range of the devices.

40. The method of claim 39, wherein each retransmission decrements a time-to-live value, thereby providing a controlled range of transmission.

41. The method of claim 39, wherein the broadcasting devices are capable of more than one wireless protocol such that a device may receive a wireless data packet under a first protocol and retransmit the wireless data packet under a second protocol.

42. The method of claim 23, wherein users may elect to receive targeted advertising on their respective devices.